

# HISTORY OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE

MARVEL

2



MCNIVEN  
FARMER

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# HISTORY OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE

At the end of existence, Franklin Richards asked Galactus to tell him the story of their universe as they wait for its heat death. Galactus began with the first stirrings of life and ended with the birth of the mutant who would become Wolverine. And now the story continues...

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MUTANTS--BORN WITH AN X-GENE THAT GIVES THEM SUPERHUMAN POWERS--BEGAN TO APPEAR WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY.



TWO MUTANTS, AN AUSTRIAN PRECOGNITIVE NAMED IRENE ADLER AND THE SHAPE-SHIFTING RAVEN DARKHOLME, EMBARKED UPON A QUEST FOR WEALTH AND INFLUENCE UNDER THE NAMES DESTINY AND MYSTIQUE.



IN LONDON, A MYSTERIOUS BAND OF HUMAN SOLDIERS WITH STRANGE HIGH-TECH WEAPONS CAME TOGETHER TO REPEL A MARTIAN INVASION. ONE SURVIVOR, EBEN STAFFORD, DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO DEFENDING THE EARTH.

REFERRING TO HIMSELF AS "THE MAN ON THE WALL," STAFFORD WOULD PASS THE ROLE TO OTHERS IN THE YEARS TO COME.





ELSEWHERE, ANOTHER LEGACY WAS CONTINUED WHEN AN ENGLISH COUPLE, THE RANDALLS, INADVERTENTLY DISCOVERED THE ANCIENT MYSTIC CITY OF K'UN-LUN DURING ONE OF ITS PERIODIC APPEARANCES ON THE EARTHLY PLANE.

THEIR SON, ORION RANDALL, ADOPTED THE WAYS OF K'UN-LUN, DEFEATED THE DRAGON SHOU-LAO AND ABSORBED SOME OF ITS POWER, BECOMING THE FIRST IRON FIST OF THE MODERN AGE.

OTHER HEROES ROSE UNDER THE THREAT OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR, AS UNION JACK, JAMES MONTGOMERY FALSWORTH BATTLED THE GERMANS ALONGSIDE THE CRIMSON CAVALIER, SIR STEEL AND THE SILVER SQUIRE AND THE PHANTOM EAGLE--FREEDOM'S FIVE. IRON FIST WOULD LATER JOIN THEIR RANKS.



BEHIND ENEMY LINES, AMERICA'S FIRST SUPER-SOLDIER, JOHN STEELE, WAS CAPTURED AND PLACED IN STASIS SO THAT GERMAN SCIENTISTS--AMONG THEM, THE CONSCRIPTED JEWISH DOCTOR ABRAHAM ERSKINE--MIGHT STUDY HIS INCREDIBLE PHYSICAL PROWESS.

A CHANCE MEETING BETWEEN SEA CAPTAIN LEONARD MCKENZIE AND PRINCESS FEN OF ATLANTIS LED TO ROMANCE, MARRIAGE AND THE BIRTH OF THE HYBRID HUMAN-ATLANTEAN CHILD, NAMOR.



ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE OF NEW YORK, A SICKLY CHILD NAMED STEVE ROGERS WAS BORN ON INDEPENDENCE DAY, A DATE FORESHADOWING THE JOURNEY UPON WHICH HIS INNATE COURAGE AND HATRED OF BULLIES WOULD LATER TAKE HIM.



VAMPIRE DEACON FROST FEASTED ON A PREGNANT WOMAN, INFUSING HER CHILD WITH ENZYME THAT TRANSFORMED ERIC BROOKS INTO THE HALF HUMAN, HALF VAMPIRE BLADE.



INSPIRED BY THE WORK OF NATHANIEL ESSEX, GENETICIST HERBERT WYNDHAM ESTABLISHED A LAB IN TRANSIA ON WUNDAGORE MOUNTAIN. A SELF-DESCRIBED VISIONARY, WYNDHAM CROWNED HIMSELF THE HIGH EVOLUTIONARY, CREATING A NEW CIVILIZATION BY TRANSFORMING ANIMALS INTO HUMAN FORMS HE CALLED NEW MEN.

ADVENTURERS AND VIGILANTES CONTINUED TO JOIN FORCES. IRON FIST LED THE SHORT-LIVED CONFEDERATES OF THE CURIOUS AGAINST SUPERNATURAL THREATS, WHILE THE EAST COAST-BASED MYSTERY MEN BATTLED CONSPIRACY AND MYSTIC EVIL.



IN CALIFORNIA, A THRILL-SEEKER CALLING HIMSELF DOMINIC FORTUNE TOOK AIM AGAINST THOSE WHO WOULD IMPERIAL AMERICA.

IN NEW YORK, DR. TOM HALLOWAY WAS INSPIRED BY THE TWO-GUN KID, NOW AN ELDERLY PATIENT UNDER HIS CARE, TO TAKE UP THE CAUSE OF HEROISM AS THE ANGEL.

EVERYWHERE, AN UNDERCURRENT OF HEROISM WAS SWOLDERING. SOON, IT WOULD BURST INTO A RED-HOT FLAME.



IN 1939, SCIENTIST PHINEAS NORTON CREATED THE FIRST ARTIFICIAL MAN—UNSUCCESSFULLY. HE BELIEVED, AS IT TURNED ABLAZE WHENEVER EXPOSED TO OXYGEN.



EVENTUALLY, NORTON'S ANDROID LEARNED TO CONTROL THE FIRE GENERATED BY HIS ANDROID BODY AND BECAME KNOWN AS THE HEROIC HUMAN TORCH.



IN TIBET, SEARCHING FOR AN HEIR TO HIS TITLE, THE ANCIENT ONE COINCILED TWO PUPILS. ONE, BARON KARL MORDO, WAS UNABLE TO SHED THE DARKNESS IN HIS HEART AND WOULD, IN TIME, BECOME ONE OF EARTH'S MOST SINISTER SORCERERS.

THE OTHER, ANTHONY LUDGATE, WENT ON TO USE HIS MAGIC TO COMBAT EVIL AS DR. DRUID.

THE TEMPERAMENTAL PRINCE NAMOR, TAUGHT BY HIS ELTERS TO DISTRUST SURFACE DWELLERS AND PREPARED TO INVADE THEIR CITIES, ATTEMPTED A RECONNAISSANCE MISSION IN NEW YORK--ONLY TO RUN AFoul OF PARANOIA AND FEAR FROM THOSE WHO REFERRED TO HIM AS "THE FREAKISH SUB-MARINER."

ENRAGED, HE ATTACKED THE CITY AND WAS REBUFFED BY THE HUMAN TORCH--THE FIRST MEETING OF THIS NEW BREED OF CHAMPIONS KNOWN AS SUPER HEROES.

OVER TIME, THE TORCH WAS ABLE TO FORM A TENACIOUS FRIENDSHIP WITH NAMOR AND CONVINCE HIM TO SPARE THE SURFACE WORLD HIS WRATH. THEIR PACT WOULD NOT LAST.

NOT LONG AFTER, HOWEVER, THE TORCH FOUND A TRUE COMPANION: THE ORPHAN TOM RAYMOND, CHILD OF TWO OF PROFESSOR HORTON'S ASSISTANTS. THROUGH A COMBINATION OF MUTATED GENETICS AND EXPOSURE TO HORTON'S EXPERIMENTS, THE BOY--NICKNAMED "TORO"--COULD EMULATE THE TORCH'S ABILITIES.



ON SEPTEMBER 1, 1939, THE GERMAN ARMY INVADED POLAND, SPARKING WORLD WAR II. AMONG HIS UNDERLINGS, FUHRER ADOLF HITLER RELIED PARTICULARLY HEAVILY ON THE MERCLESS JOHANN SCHMIDT, WHOM HITLER HIMSELF HAD TRAINED IN THE WAYS OF THE NAZIS.

UNDER THE GROTESQUE IDENTITY OF THE RED SKULL, SCHMIDT BEGAN A REIGN OF TERROR IN EUROPE.

THOUGH NOT YET OFFICIALLY ENGAGED IN THE WAR, THE AMERICAN MILITARY NONTHELESS SOUGHT TO CREATE A SYMBOL OF NATIONAL STRENGTH. DR. ERSKINE OF GERMANY, WHO HAD DEFECTED TO THE U.S., SPEARHEADED OPERATION: REBIRTH, TURNING FRAIL VOLUNTEER STEVE ROGERS INTO A SUPERHUMAN FIGHTING MACHINE.

ASSIGNED THE CODENAME CAPTAIN AMERICA, ROGERS PROTECTED THE HOMEFRONT ALONG-SIDE THE ORPHANED JAMES BUCHANAN "BUCKY" BARNES. ROGERS BATTLED NAZI FIFTH COLUMNISTS VALIANTLY, BUT HE YEARNED TO TAKE THE FIGHT TO THE FRONT LINES.









IN LATE APRIL 1945, NEAR THE END OF WORLD WAR II, CAPTAIN AMERICA AND BUCKY PREVENTED NAZI OFFICER BARON HEINRICH ZEMO FROM SUCCESSFULLY USING AN EXPLOSIVE DRONE AGAINST THE ALLIES.



STEVE ROGERS, PRESERVED IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION BY THE SUPER-SOLDIER SERUM, WOULD REMAIN LOST FOR DECADES TO COME.





AT THE CLOSE OF THE WAR, THE INVADERS TRANSITIONED INTO THE PEACETIME ALL-WINNERS SQUAD--



--WHILE THE DESTROYER, UNION JACK AND SPITFIRE Banded together to hunt down surviving Nazis and other war criminals. Eventually, this group would join others in becoming the V-BATTALION.



THE WAR HAD ENDED, BUT HOSTILITIES HAD NOT. AMERICA ENGAGED COMMUNIST RUSSIA IN A COLD WAR FOUGHT NOT WITH OPEN CONFLICT BUT WITH ESPIONAGE. THE SOVIETS TURNED A BRAINWASHED BUCKY BARNES INTO ONE OF THEIR MOST EFFECTIVE AND LEAST SEEN OPERATIVES: THE WINTER SOLDIER.



STATESIDE, GROOMED BY A COLONY OF ETERNALS, BOB GRAYSON USED URANIUM WEAPONS TO BATTLE THE COMMUNISTS AS MARVEL BOY.

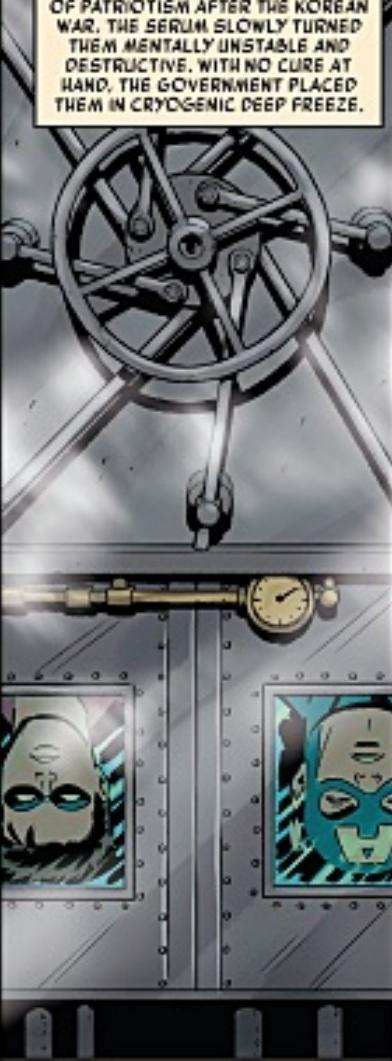
MARINE ADAM BRASHEAR DID THE SAME AS THE BLUE MARVEL.

NEW HEROES WERE NEEDED AS THE OLD ONES CONTINUED TO DISAPPEAR.

WILLIAM BURNSIDE AND JACK MONROE CLAIMED THE ROLES OF CAPTAIN AMERICA AND BUCKY AFTER TAKING A FLAWED VERSION OF THE ORIGINAL SUPER-SOLDIER SERUM.

THOUGH THEY BECAME A SYMBOL OF PATRIOTISM AFTER THE KOREAN WAR, THE SERUM SLOWLY TURNED THEM MENTALLY UNSTABLE AND DESTRUCTIVE. WITH NO CURE AT HAND, THE GOVERNMENT PLACED THEM IN CRYOGENIC DEEP FREEZE.

THE HUMAN TORCH, VICTIM OF THE LINGERING RADIATION OF AN ATOMIC BOMB, BURNED HIMSELF OUT BENEATH THE NEVADA DESERT.





THE SUB-MARINER'S MEMORIES  
WERE ERASED BY THE VILLAINOUS  
PAUL DESTINE, WHO LEFT NAMOR  
WANDERING NEW YORK CITY AS A  
HOMELESS BEGGAR.



NICK FURY REMAINED VITAL THANKS TO  
A UNIQUE INFINITY FORMULA THAT  
SLOWED HIS AGING SUBSTANTIALLY.



AS A C.I.A. AGENT, FURY  
FOUGHT FOR HIS COUNTRY  
AS THE NEXT TO BECOME  
THE MAN ON THE WALL,  
HE FOUGHT FOR HIS PLANET.



AT THE HEIGHT OF THE COLD WAR, FBI  
AGENT JIMMY WOO ASSEMBLED A  
"DEPARTMENT ZERO" OF HEROES--  
GORILLA-MAN, VENUS, MARVEL  
BOY, NAHORA AND THE HUMAN  
ROBOT--TO BATTLE THE MOST  
RECENT HEAD OF THE ATLAS EMPIRE,  
PLAN CHU, THE GOLDEN CLAW.

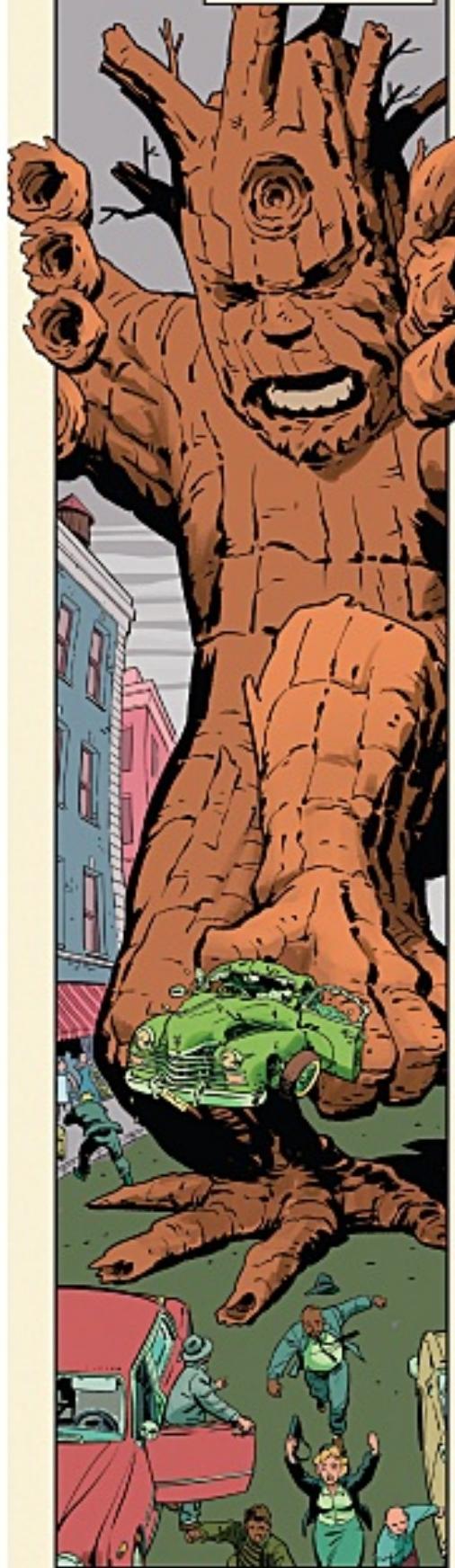


NICK FURY BROUGHT TOGETHER  
KRAVEN THE HUNTER,  
SABRETOOTH, SILVER SABLE,  
DOMINIC FORTUNE AND OTHERS  
UNDER THE DIRECTIVE ENTITLED  
THE AVENGERS INITIATIVE.



SUDDEN WAVES OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL AND EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL THREATS CREATED PANIC. NOTABLE AMONG THEM WAS A TOWERING REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL RACE FLORA COLOSSI, WHO CAME TO EARTH TO AGGRESSIVELY COLLECT INFORMATION ABOUT ITS INHABITANTS.

CALLING ITSELF GROOT, ITS ABILITY TO CONTROL PLANT LIFE NEARLY DESTROYED A TOWN BEFORE IT WAS STOPPED.



DOCTOR STEPHEN STRANGE, THE MOST PRIZED OF THE ANCIENT ONE'S STUDENTS, SET UP RESIDENCE AT 177A BLEECKER STREET IN NEW YORK'S GREENWICH VILLAGE.

AT FIRST DEALING WITH MINOR MAGICAL MENACES, HE WOULD SOON BE INTRODUCED TO MYSTERIES OF THE COSMOS PREVIOUSLY UNSEEN BY MORTAL HUMANS.



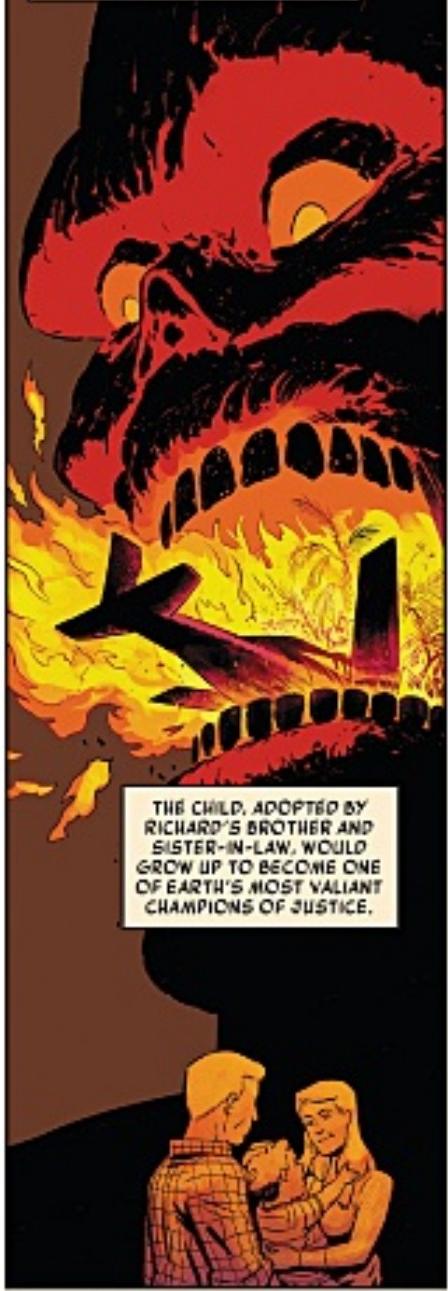
ANDRE THORTON, BETTER KNOWN AS THE PROFESSOR, USED MISTER SINISTER'S ABANDONED WORK TO ATTEMPT TO CREATE SUPER-POWERED WARRIORS OF HIS OWN. WEAPON PLUS YIELDED A GROUP OF BLACK-OPS SOLDIERS CALLED TEAM X.

PRE-EMINENT AMONG THEM WAS A BONE-CLAWED MUTANT WITH HEALING ABILITIES--THE CANADIAN JAMES HOWLETT, KNOWN NOW AS "LOGAN" OR "WOLVERINE." LOGAN, SILVER FOX, MAVERICK AND OTHERS WORKED IN SECRET BOTH FOR THE WEAPON PLUS PROGRAM AND FOR THE C.I.A.

LEAVING GOVERNMENT SERVICE AFTER ACCIDENTALLY SHOOTING A FELLOW AGENT, LOGAN WAS CAPTURED BY AN OFFSHOOT GROUP, WEAPON X, IN AN ATTEMPT TO REMAKE HIM AS A LIVING WEAPON. THEY INFUSED HIS SKELETON, INCLUDING HIS CLAWS, WITH THE INDESTRUCTIBLE METAL KNOWN AS ADAMANTIUM.

REDUCED TO A NEAR-MINDLESS STATE, LOGAN BROKE FREE OF HIS REPROGRAMMING, DESTROYED HIS TORMENTORS AND WANDERED INTO THE CANADIAN ROCKIES. HE WOULD SOON BE RECRUITED INTO CANADA'S SUPERHUMAN-ORIENTED DÉPARTEMENT H.

THE SECOND RED SKULL  
ENGINEERED THE FATAL  
PLANE CRASH OF TWO C.I.A.  
OPERATIVES, RICHARD AND  
MARY PARKER, SHORTLY AFTER  
THEIR CHILD, PETER, WAS BORN.



THE CHILD, ADOPTED BY  
RICHARD'S BROTHER AND  
SISTER-IN-LAW, WOULD  
GROW UP TO BECOME ONE  
OF EARTH'S MOST VALIANT  
CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE.



A UNITED NATIONS-AFFILIATED GROUP SPURRED  
THE NEXT INCARNATION OF THE BROTHERHOOD  
OF THE SHIELD AS A COUNTERMEASURE  
AGAINST THE RISING EVIL OF HYDRA. NICK FURY  
WAS APPOINTED THE HEAD OF THE SUPREME  
HEADQUARTERS, INTERNATIONAL ESPIONAGE,  
LAW-ENFORCEMENT DIVISION, OR S.H.I.E.L.D.



IN LOS ANGELES, THE GIBBORIM--  
REQUIRING MORTAL ACOLETES TO  
SERVE THEM ON EARTH--PROMISED  
WEALTH, POWER AND INFLUENCE TO  
THEIR POTENTIAL SERVANTS IF THEY  
COULD PROVE THEIR WORTH.

VOWING TO PASS THIS  
REWARD TO THEIR CHILDREN,  
A GROUP KNOWN AS THE PRIDE  
DEMONSTRATED THEIR VALUE BY  
BECOMING THE COVERT RULERS  
OF THE CITY'S CRIMINAL EMPIRE.

WHEN THE ASIAN NATION OF SIANCONG RESISTED COMMUNIST TAKEOVER, THE CONFLICT TURNED INTERNATIONAL.



NATIONS BOTH FROM THE WEST AND THE EAST ENTERED THE DECADES-LONG SIANCONG WAR, IN TIME STRUGGLING TO LAY FIRST CLAIM TO SIANCONG'S PRIMARY ASSET: A MYSTERIOUS ENERGY KNOWN ONLY AS "THE DRAGON'S BREATH," AROUND WHICH CULTS AND LEGENDS HAD GROWN.

ASIAN CRIME BARONS THE MANDARIN AND LADY LOTUS MANIPULATED MUCH OF THE CONFLICT, AS DID THE WARLORD WONG-CHU.



IT WAS IN SIANCONG THAT MARINES JAMES RHODES AND FRANK CASTLE, ARMY AIR FORCE PILOT BEN GRIMM, MILITARY CONSULTANT REED RICHARDS AND MANY OTHERS WHO WOULD LATER BECOME KEY FIGURES IN HISTORY FIRST FOUGHT IN SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY.





ODIN, EXASPERATED BY THOR'S ARROGANCE, EXILED HIM TO EARTH IN THE MORTAL GUISE OF A DISABLED YOUNG MEDICAL STUDENT NAMED DONALD BLAKE, THE MEMORY OF HIS TRUE IDENTITY STRIPPED FROM HIM. AS BLAKE, THOR LEARNED THE VALUE OF HUMILITY AND EMPATHY AS A HEALER AND SURGEON.



THE STAGE WAS SET FOR THE AGE OF HEROES.

TO BE  
CONTINUED!

# NEXT



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# HISTORY OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #2 ANNOTATIONS

Design: Stacie Zuckef



*X-Treme X-Men #1* (2001) detailed the manifestation of privileged teen Irene Adler's precognitive powers. Blinded by her powers and gaining the terrible burden of helping shape the future drove her to frustration and terrorism. After recruiting the help of the shape-shifting detective Raven Darkholme in her quest, the two became Destiny and Mystique—future members of the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants. Eventually, the two became lovers, as initially implied in *Marvel Fanfare #40* (1988).



Eben Stafford was among the Men on the Wall—a group of humans who secretly battled extraterrestrials since at least 1913—when they battled an alien invasion of London in 1917 from the shadows while superhumans like Freedom's Five fought the aliens directly. The Men on the Wall gradually fell in battle, but Stafford survived and continued his war against cosmic threats to Earth into the 1940s; his subsequent activities are unrevealed. *Original Sin Annual #1* (2014) reveals details about Stafford and his legacy.



After his parents crash-landed their aircraft in K'un-Lun, an extradimensional city that periodically appears on Earth, Orson Randall was born and welcomed by the city's residents as a native. After years of training, Randall defeated the dragon Shou-Lao the Undying in battle, earning the role of the Iron Fist, K'un-Lun's greatest defender. Randall's origin is told in *Immortal Iron Fist #1-6* (2007).



Randall's periodic journeys to Earth's dimension include battles in No Man's Land during World War I and in 1917 briefly serving as a member of Freedom's Five, a group of costumed men from the United States, Great Britain and France who opposed Germany during the war. Read about the Freedom's Five's exploits in *All-New Invaders #12* (2015) and *Invaders #7* (1976).



John Steele was a United States soldier who battled Germans during World War I using his superhuman strength and durability in battle; the source of these powers remains unrevealed. Steele was captured sometime toward the end of the war and placed into suspended animation by the Germans. Over the subsequent two decades, German scientists experimented on Steele in efforts to learn how to replicate his powers; among these scientists was Abraham Erskine, who wanted to perfect human physiology to end disease and infirmity. What is known about Steele (as well as some further hints about his history) is told in *Secret Avengers #11* (2011) and *The Marvels Project #1-8* (2009-2010).



When American seaman Captain Leonard McKenzie used explosive charges to break ice during an Antarctic expedition in 1920, he unwittingly caused great destruction in the underwater city of Atlantis. Atlantean Princess Fen journeyed to the surface to investigate but was captured by McKenzie's men. Over the following weeks of captivity, Fen and McKenzie became friends then fell in love. After their marriage, they conceived a child. However, Fen's father, Emperor Thakorr, sent troops to recover Fen. McKenzie was believed killed during the skirmish. Sometime after returning to Atlantis, Fen gave birth to the pink-skinned Namor ("Avenging Son" in Atlantean). Namor's unusual origins granted him vast hybrid mutant powers. The ill-fated romance between Leonard McKenzie and Fen and the birth of Namor are detailed in *Marvel Comics #1* (1939) and *Saga of the Sub-Mariner #1* (1989).



Steve Rogers was born in 1922 during the Great Depression and was often bullied by local Brooklyn boys for his slight, sickly frame and his artistic dreams. Despite his tortured childhood, Rogers developed a strong sense of right and wrong from his grandfather's tales of men and women who resisted oppression over history. *The Marvels Project #4* (2010) depicts Rogers' bullying while *Marvel Holiday Special* (1994) shows the influence his grandfather had on the boy.



When a vampire fed on a pregnant woman while she was giving birth, enzymes transferred to the surviving infant, making him a Dhampir—a being affected by a vampire's bite but not converted to one. By age nine, Eric Brooks began his lifelong quest to destroy vampires; by adulthood, he had earned the name Blade for his proficiency with bladed weapons. *Tomb of Dracula* #13 (1973) and #58 (1977).



The dark, conspiracy-laden streets of 1932's New York City drew together a disparate group of people who took up arms against the forces of the would-be conqueror General, the mystical powers behind his efforts and the Board—a corrupt cabal of businessmen who caused the Great Depression. *Mystery Men* #1-5 (2011) contain the only recorded activities (to date) of stage magician Revenant, the gentleman thief Operative, super-powered swordsman Achilles, the high-flying rocketeer Aviatrix and the twisted, syringe-wielding Surgeon.



By the late 1920s, aspiring geneticist Herbert Wyndham had built a genetic accelerator to further his studies. Through the 1930s Wyndham's skills had advanced to the point where he could transform animals to human form and sentience. Wyndham named these beings the New Men, who in turn began calling their creator the High Evolutionary. The third story in *Punisher Annual* #1 (1988) and *Thor* #135 (1966) summarize Wyndham's origin story.



*Immortal Iron Fist Annual* #1 (2007) and *Immortal Iron Fist: Orson Randall and the Green Mist of Death* #1 (2008) detail the exploits of the Confederates of the Curious, a group of friends who gathered around Orson Randall amid his global adventures. The Confederates comprised Randall; the Contessa, Vera Vidal; circus strongman Chores Macgillicuddy; orphan Wendell Rand; magician Shadu the Shady; journalist Ernst Erskine and Barko the dog. Within a few years, Randall disbanded the Confederacy to protect them from his extradimensional enemies.



By the 1930s, the good-hearted David Fortunov had earned a reputation growing up as a tough young man in Prohibition-era New York City. After crossing a violent mobster, Fortunov moved to California and adopted the name Dominic Fortune. He soon began a career as a swashbuckling brigand-for-hire on both coasts. *Marvel Premiere* #56 (1980) and *Marvel Preview* #2 (1975) depict two of Fortune's adventures.



Thomas Halloway grew up in a prison where his father was the warden, giving him vast knowledge of the criminal underworld. As a wealthy former surgeon, Halloway became a costumed detective using his skills to fight crime as early as 1936. Angel first appears in *Marvel Comics #1* (1939) while *The Marvels Project #1-8* (2009-2010) chronicles some of his exploits.



the Ancient One had for his pupil's redemption. The backup stories in *Doctor Strange: Sorcerer Supreme #6-8* (1989) explain Baron Mordo's origin.



another in preparation for finding a replacement Sorcerer Supreme. Druid became a powerful practitioner of the mystic arts and the crimefighter called Doctor Droom, then later Doctor Druid. His origin can be found in *Weird Wonder Tales #19* (1976).



*Marvel Comics #1* (1939), *Marvels #1* (1994) and *Saga of the Original Human Torch #1* (1990) detail Professor Phineas Horton and Dr. James Bradley's creation of the Human Torch, an android that would unexpectedly burst into flames when exposed to oxygen but not burn. When presented to the public in 1939, public fear and outcries forced Horton to bury the Torch. When oxygen seeped into his tomb, the Torch's flames freed him; after nitrogen granted him control of his flames, the Torch gained public acceptance when he stopped a criminal siege in New York City and began a crime-fighting career.

Karl Mordo was born to a Transylvanian baron in 1921. By 1939, the second Baron Mordo had become a disciple of Earth's Sorcerer Supreme, the Ancient One, who hoped to teach Mordo how to restrain the evil his mentor sensed in him. Despite the Ancient One's influence, Mordo's fascination with dark and destructive magic persisted, and by the early 1940s he had allied with the extradimensional tyrant Dormammu, ending any hope



Unaware an oxygen imbalance in his body's chemistry due to his amphibious nature was causing him to be irrationally violent, Namor attacked New York City in early 1940 after a series of misunderstandings with surface dwellers. Now a police officer, the Human Torch fought Namor in battles that raged throughout the city, in the air and underwater. Despite these fights, a mutual respect and deep friendship blossomed between the two. Namor's violent interactions with the surface world and the epic battles between Namor and the Human Torch are shown in *Human Torch Comics* #58 (1941), *Marvel Mystery Comics* #2-10 (1939-1940) and *Saga of Namor, the Sub-Mariner* #2-4 (1968).



I STARED INTO THOSE HATE-FILLED EYES AND SAW A REFLECTION OF ALL MY DARKEST FEARS AND FRUSTRATIONS. I SAW EVERYTHING I WAS-- AND EVERYTHING I COULD BE.



When Adolf Hitler encountered bellhop Johann Schmidt, he discovered a kindred spirit of hatred. After being personally trained by Hitler, Schmidt quickly became second only to Hitler and one of the most feared figures among Nazi forces, especially after adopting the costumed identity of the Red Skull. The Skull's origin is revealed in *Captain America* #298 (1984).



*Human Torch Comics* #2 (1940) features the debut of Toro, a young boy named Thomas Raymond who had a complete immunity to fire and who could manipulate flames to allow him to fly and perform feats similar to the Human Torch. The Torch made the orphaned Toro his ward and sidekick after learning of his powers. Over the years, Toro's powers have been theorized to be a result of mutant genes, his parents' extensive research and experiments in fireproofing materials before his birth or latent Inhuman genes in Toro's family tree.





Orphan James Buchanan Barnes convinced officials to let him be a ward of the state at Camp Lehigh, eventually becoming the camp's mascot. In 1940, Barnes befriended Private Steve Rogers, eventually stumbling upon his secret identity as Captain America. Sworn to secrecy, Barnes soon adopted his own costumed identity of Bucky and accompanied Captain America on various missions. He also was given intense training to carry out assignments deemed too dark for Captain America's public persona.

Captain America and Bucky's origins are first told in *Captain America Comics #1* (1941); further details are fleshed out in *Captain America #109* (1969), *Captain America #255* (1981) and *Tales of Suspense #63* (1965).



In late 1941, individual wartime missions brought together Captain America, Bucky, the Human Torch, Toro and Namor. After seeing them in action, U.K. Prime Minister Winston Churchill requested they stay together and act as the Allies' unofficial "invaders" of occupied Europe until Allied forces were ready to do so themselves. The Invaders operated throughout the war, adding later recruits Spitfire (Jacqueline Falsworth), Union Jack (Brian Falsworth) and others. The team's first gathering and naming by Churchill is recounted in *Giant-Size Invaders #1* (1975).



In the early 1940s, superhumans began appearing with increasing frequency. Among them was the immortal "keeper of law" Aarkus, who operated as the Vision from the Dimension of Smoke. The Liberty Legion, a group of American costumed heroes, protected the United States during World War II while the invaders fought in Europe. A group of heroes who fought with Allied forces were captured by Nazis and put into suspended animation, then forgotten with the Third Reich's defeat until a construction crew revived them in modern times; they became known as the Twelve. The Vision is depicted on page nine, as are the members of the Liberty Legion: Miss America, Thin Man, Whizzer, Red Raven, Blue Diamond and Jack Frost (not shown: Bucky and the Patriot). *Marvel Mystery Comics* #13 (1940) features the first appearance of the Vision, *Marvel Premiere* #29 (1976) depicts the first gathering of the Liberty Legion (and recalls the origin of each member) and *The Twelve* #1-12 (2007-2012) details how the title team came together.



**LIBERTY LEGION WITH BUCKY**



THE TWELVE



"Pinky" Pinkerton, among others. The Howlers' most persistent enemy was Nazi Baron Wolfgang von Strucker and his Blitzkrieg Squad, a direct response to the Howling Commandos. During a mission in France, an injured Fury was the recipient of Professor Berthold Sternberg's Infinity Formula, a serum that would impede aging; throughout the war, the Commandos were exposed to Fury's blood, which increased their vitality into their advanced years. The origin of the team is told in *Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandos* #34 (1966) and Fury's receipt of the Infinity Formula is detailed in *Marvel Spotlight* #31 (1976).

**The Howling Commandos** were a squadron of rangers formed in World War II who were also granted the rank of commando by Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Founding members included commanding officer Captain Sam "Happy" Sawyer, field-leader Sergeant Nick Fury, Corporal Timothy "Dum Dum" Dugan, Isadore "Izzy" Cohen, Gabe Jones, Dino Manelli, Jonathan "Junior" Juniper and Robert "Reb" Ralston. Later recruited for the team was Bucky.



**X-Men: Magneto Testament #1-5 (2008)** tells the story of Max Eisenhardt, a Jewish boy who grew up in Germany during Hitler's rise to power. Eisenhardt survived his family's execution thanks to the subconscious use of his mutant power to control metal causing the bullets to miss him. After being captured, Eisenhardt was sent to Auschwitz concentration camp, where he spent the remainder of the war as a Sonderkommando, escaping just days before Soviets liberated the camp. Sometime later, Eisenhardt's use of his powers resulted in a human mob attacking him and preventing him from saving his daughter from a house fire, resulting in her death. Experiencing humanity's fear and hatred toward him as a mutant and a Jewish man began shaping his anger into a force the world would soon come to dread.

**Isaiah Bradley** enlisted in the U.S. Army after Pearl Harbor and was a member of two battalions of African-American soldiers who were used as test subjects in racist, unethical and horrific attempts to recreate Captain America. Only seven survived the initial process, and all but Bradley swiftly perished thereafter. Subsequently sent to Europe, Bradley eventually went rogue and stole a Captain America uniform to stop experiments Nazis were performing on Jewish captives; Bradley was subsequently captured and sent to Auschwitz. After being freed by German anti-Nazi resistance fighters, Bradley presumably fought Nazis for a time before being smuggled back to the Allies. Bradley was court-martialed for the uniform theft and sentenced to life in prison. After seventeen years of solitary confinement and improper medical treatment, the imperfect serum used to give him his powers left him brain-damaged. Years later, President Dwight D. Eisenhower pardoned Bradley. While not shown in-story, page ten's depiction of Bradley fighting the Nazi Super-Soldier Master Man presumably took place after Auschwitz but before his return to the Allies. *Truth: Red, White & Black #1-7 (2003)*.



In 1945, while striving to prevent Nazi scientist Baron Heinrich Zemo from obtaining an experimental drone, Captain America and Bucky were flung into the ocean when the plane exploded. Captain America entered suspended animation thanks to the Super-Soldier Serum and eventually was frozen alive; Allied forces believed both Cap and Bucky killed. *Avengers #4 (1964)*.

Following the "death" of Captain America and Bucky, President Harry Truman appointed William Nasland, the costumed hero known as the Spirit of '76, as a replacement Captain America within the ranks of the Invaders; he also ordered young Fred Davis to serve as Bucky. Nasland served in the role until he was killed in 1946 while saving congressional candidate John F. Kennedy from assassination. After finding Nasland dead, fellow hero Jeffrey Mace, the Patriot, assumed the Captain America identity to complete Nasland's mission and carry on the Captain's legacy until he retired a few years later. The tale of the first two Captain America replacements is told in *What If? #4 (1977)*.



"THE REST, AS YOU KNOW, IS HISTORY! SUPPORT PILLARS, CRISS-CROSSED ABOVE ME, SAVED ME FROM THE TOXIC MURK OF OVERHEAD, AND THE EXPLOSIVE GAS WHICH WAS THEN RELEASED KEPT ME ALIVE FOR YEARS IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION, UNTIL--!"

"LOOK! JUST AHEAD--! IT'S THE RED SKULL! WE'VE FOUND HIM!"

A number of years after the Red Skull was unexpectedly cast into suspended animation toward the end of World War II, communist Albert Malik assumed the Red Skull Identity under orders from the Soviet government in hopes of taking advantage of the original's feared reputation. As the Skull, Malik would embark on a criminal career that supported communist goals and ideals. The original Red Skull's journey into suspended animation can be found in *Tales of Suspense* #79 (1966), while Malik's impersonation of his identity is summarized in *Captain America Annual* #13 (1994).



After the war's end, a number of Invaders members returned to America and formed the All-Winners Squad in 1946. Both William Nasland and Jeff Mace served on the team as Captain America, as did the Fred Davis Bucky. Only a handful of the Squad's exploits have been recorded, but it is known they remained together until the late 1940s. Pictured on page thirteen is the group, as the Invaders, battling the Nazi Warrior Woman sometime in 1945 before returning to America in '46. An early mission of the team can be found in *All-Winners Comics* #19 (1946), while *What If? #4* (1977) tells another.



On April 25, 1945, the Human Torch and Toro joined Allied forces in an invasion of Berlin. A few days later they found Adolf Hitler hiding in a bunker, preparing to detonate explosives. The Human Torch executed Hitler to prevent his last threat from being realized. *What If? #4* (1977).



A top Nazi operative who fell out of Hitler's favor due to repeated failures, Baron Wolfgang von Strucker's death was ordered by the Führer. Strucker escaped Germany and, after foreseeing Hitler's fall, began building a power base for himself. After joining forces with the Hand, Strucker helped form Hydra from underground subversive movements. Through murder and deception, Strucker quickly assumed command of the organization and severed ties with the Hand due to their worship of the demon Beast, then helped shape Hydra into a world-threatening organization. Hydra's formation is chronicled in *Captain Savage and His Leatherneck Raiders* #2-4 (1968).

After the end of World War II, a group of European heroes, including Spitfire, Union Jack and the Destroyer (Roger Aubrey), helped form an organization that would hunt Nazi war criminals and prevent future despots from coming to power. Others soon joined, and a covert revival of the V-Battalion—a French/English wartime Nazi resistance force—was soon underway. *Citizen V and the V-Battalion* #1-3 (2001) and *Citizen V and the V-Battalion: Everlasting* #1-3 (2002).



By the mid-1950s, Bucky's left arm had been replaced with a cybernetic arm, and mental implants helped transform him into the perfect operative. As the Winter Soldier, he was sent around the world to carry out assassinations, while being placed in stasis between missions. *Captain America #11* (2005) details his continued manipulation by the Soviets.



After serving as a marine during the Korean War, Adam Brashear completed his Ivy League studies and was contracted by the government to build a reactor that could convert antimatter to energy. Brashear was saved from a laboratory accident by his friend and fellow veteran Conner Sims, but the accident left both men infused with antimatter. Brashear became the Blue Marvel, a celebrated hero, while Sims became the deranged Anti-Man and frequently used deadly force in trying to rid Earth of prejudice. When the public learned Blue Marvel was a black man, the government asked him to step down to prevent widespread revolt in American society, which was already battling over segregation and civil rights. Brashear would reluctantly become the Blue Marvel again in modern times. *Adam: Legend of the Blue Marvel #1-5* (2008).



*Marvel Boy #1* (1960) tells the tale of Robert Grayson, a young infant who was taken to Uranus by his scientist father, who was looking to avoid World War II. They were welcomed by a settlement of Eternals, who had established a community there 30,000 years prior. By 1950, Grayson had honed his mental abilities. Grayson's father then sent him back to Earth to help prevent further war. Grayson was outfitted with Uranian weapons and technology and used them as the superheroic Marvel Boy for much of the decade. *Marvel Boy: The Uranian #1-3* (2010) expands Grayson's origin story.

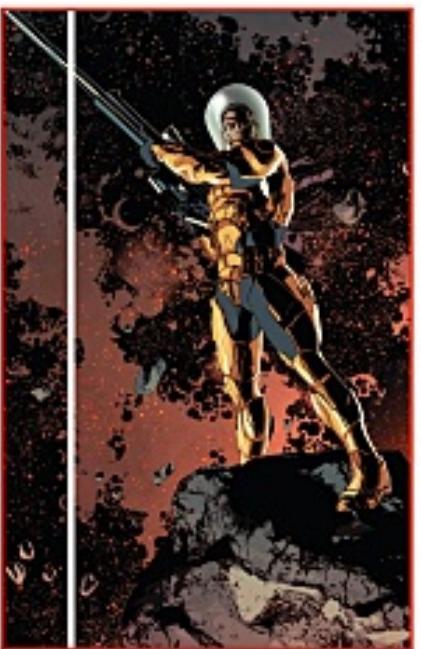




After being exposed to an atomic bomb test in 1953, the Human Torch's powers began flaring out of control. In late 1955, fearing he would endanger others, the Torch burned his way underground and deactivated himself, as told in the *Saga of Original Human Torch #4* (1990).



In 1958, megalomaniac Destiny (Paul Destine) attacked Atlantis to test his powers. In the resulting confrontation, Destiny imposed amnesia on Namor and destroyed Atlantis. Namor was left to wander New York City for years as a homeless derelict. *Saga of the Sub-Mariner #6* (1988) and *Sub-Mariner #1* (1968) detail Namor's confrontation with Destiny.



After Man on the Wall Woodrow McCord was killed in 1958 while preventing an extraterrestrial Tribellian invasion of Earth, Nick Fury took the position. By 1968, Fury was using Life-Model Decoys to represent him in multiple places to secretly protect Earth from those who would prey on the planet. *Original Sin #5* (2014) and *Original Sin Annual #1* (2014) hold the details.



Plan Chu (the Golden Claw) chose newborn Jimmy Woo to succeed him as head of the Atlas Foundation, a secret organization continuing the empire of Genghis Khan. Woo's parents fled with him to thwart the Claw's plan and pushed Woo to pursue a career in law enforcement. Woo became an FBI agent by the 1950s, bringing him into a series of confrontations with the Claw who was making moves against the United States. In 1958 Woo assembled the G-Men, a superhuman team, to help him rescue President Dwight D. Eisenhower from the Claw. Woo chose the Gorilla-Man (Ken Hale), Marvel Boy (Bob Grayson), Venus (a siren posing as the Olympian goddess) and the cousin of the Atlantean Namor, Namora. Namora refused to join but led them to the Human Robot (M-11). After rescuing the president, the G-Men remained together for six months until the government ordered them to disband, believing the public was not ready for a superhuman group. Years later, Namora would officially join the team when they reassembled in modern times as the Agents of Atlas. Woo's struggles against the Claw are detailed in *Yellow Claw #1-4* (1956-1957) and the gatherings of the G-Men/Agents of Atlas are told in *Agents of Atlas #1-6* (2006).



To help curb the threat to humanity posed by monstrous creatures such as Gorgilla and Gigantus, a number of superhumans gathered as the Monster Hunters: the immortal Ulysses Bloodstone, Doctor Druid, the Eternal Makkari, the Wakandan Zawadi and the Atlantean Namora all served on the team. The team operated out of the Explorers Club in New York City, and their exploits were recorded by Stanley Hathaway. The group's story was told in *Marvel: The Lost Generation #2* (2001) and *Marvel Universe #4-7* (1998).



As detailed in *Avengers #186-187* (1979) and the second story in *X-Men Annual #12* (1988), Gregor Russoff used the Darkhold in 1958, hoping the demon Chthon could free him from the curse of being a werewolf. Instead of curing himself, Russoff freed the demon from his imprisonment within Wundagore Mountain, where the High Evolutionary had built his Citadel of Science and laboratories. When Chthon attacked Wundagore, the High Evolutionary and his Knights of Wundagore (members of his New Men whom he had knighted) were able to drive the demon back with the help of the spirit of sixth-century sorcerer Magnus. However, Chthon was able to kill Russoff as well as magically mark an infant born in the Citadel that night under the care of New Man Bova. Chthon hoped the infant, Wanda Maximoff, would later serve as another access to Earth.



Countless monsters began appearing around the globe in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Their rampages threatened many lives. Among these monsters were such colorfully named creatures as Googam, Fin Fang Foom, Gargantus, Orrgo, Spragg and Xemnu. Groot was a member of Planet X's sentient, treelike species, who was vilified among his people for fighting for the social rights of lesser beings of his planet. In 1960, the immature and impulsive Groot visited Earth and attempted to kidnap humans for study on Planet X, but he was defeated by specially bred termites created by biologist Leslie Evans. A selection of this era's monster tales can be experienced in two volumes of *Monsters: The Marvel Monsterbus* by Stan Lee, Larry Lieber & Jack Kirby. *Tales to Astonish #13* (1960) featured Groot's first appearance.



A group of costumed heroes banded together in 1958 to form the First Line, intending to be a defense for humanity from those who would harm them. Various versions of the team would come and go over the years, drawing members from superhumans of their time, but nearly all the members were killed while preventing a Skrull invasion of Earth. The battle resulted in the elimination of an entire generation of Earth's super-beings. Among the team's early members are Yankee Clipper, Black Fox, Nightingale and Liberty Girl. First Line's origins can be found in *Marvel: The Lost Generation #2-4* (2000-2001).



When the U.S. government learned of a project attempting to re-create Captain America and the Infinity Formula that had prolonged Nick Fury's life, the U.S. president ordered Fury to assemble a team to stop the Nazi plans. Fury gathered his former Howling Commandos teammates Dum Dum Dugan and Gabe Jones, the mutant savage Sabretooth, Dominic Fortune, Namora, Russian big game hunter Kraven (Sergei Kravinoft), Ulysses Bloodstone and Nazi hunter Silver Sable (Ernest Sablinova). This group—dubbed the *Avengers Initiative*—was later joined by the Blonde Phantom and sorcerer Powell McTeague in opposing the dark plans of Icon, a deeply classified government project that worked with former Nazis to fight the Soviets and communism. These 1959 events are recounted in *Avengers 1959 #1-5* (2011-2012) and *New Avengers #10-12* (2011).



Egotistical surgeon Doctor Stephen Strange sought out the mystical Ancient One to heal his hands, which were ruined in a car accident. Despite the Ancient One turning down his request for healing, Strange ultimately offered himself as a disciple and vowed to learn magic to protect Earth from threats like the Ancient One's pupil Baron Mordo. Eventually becoming a master of the mystic arts, Doctor Strange relocated to New York City and purchased a building in Greenwich Village, which he turned into his Sanctum Sanctorum. Doctor Strange's origin is told in *Strange Tales #115* (1963). His first time visiting and purchasing the house in Greenwich Village can be found in *Doctor Strange: From the Marvel Vault #1* (2011) and a tour of the Sanctum Sanctorum was given in *Doctor Strange #2* (2016).



By 1961, James Howlett—going by Logan now—had gone down many paths in a life filled with tragedy and pain, including serving as a soldier and doing mercenary work, where his mutant healing factor, superhuman senses and bone claws served him well. That year, Logan joined the black ops Team X as Wolverine, undertaking missions for the C.I.A. and the Weapon X (A.K.A. Weapon Ten) Program, which was the tenth descendant of the Weapon Plus Program that created Captain America. As a member of the team, Logan was often subjected to memory implants and telepathically manipulated, frequently leaving his mind fragmented and confused. Logan served on Team X until late 1968. At some point, Logan was captured by the Weapon X Program, which had begun using mutants as tools more than operatives, and he was subjected to invasive, incredibly painful

procedures to turn him into a living weapon capable of killing anything, including superhumans. Logan was only able to survive due to his healing factor. The process left Logan with Adamantium metal fused to his bones and claws, making them unbreakable. His claws could now cut through almost any substance. After being subjected to more implanted memories and brainwashing, Logan was left in a near-mindless state. However, at some point, Logan went into a berserker fury and broke free, slaughtering the staff and crew at the Weapon X facility then fleeing into the Canadian wilderness, where he lived in a feral state for months. Team X is given coverage in *Wolverine Origins #9* (2007) and *X-Men #5-7* (1992), and the horrific experiments Logan endured at the hands of Weapon X are detailed in *Marvel Comics Presents #72-84* (1991).



"IF PARKER SUSPECTED THAT THE RED SKULL WAS WISE TO HIM--AND WAS SETTING A TRAP--HE GAVE NO SIGN--"



When Red Skull (Albert Malik) learned that two operatives in his criminal organization were actually C.I.A. agents Richard and Mary Parker, he had an assassin kill them through a plane crash and frame them for detection. The Parkers were survived by an infant son, Peter. *Amazing Spider-Man Annual #5* (1968).



LANGLEY, VIRGINIA.  
HOURS LATER...

AND WHAT ARE YOUR  
PERSONAL THOUGHTS  
ON THIS NEW  
FIRST LINE?

AND THEN,  
THE INTRUDERS  
DESTRUCTED.  
THERE WAS NO  
OTHER LOSS  
OF LIFE.

THEY'RE STILL GETTIN' THEIR  
ACT TOGETHER. EFFIGY'S NO  
YANKEE CLIPPER... BUT I DON'T  
THINK ANY OF 'EM ARE JUST  
IN IT FOR THE GLORY.

I'D SAY KEEP  
AN EYE ON 'EM  
AND LET 'EM  
GO THEIR OWN  
WAY... FOR  
NOW.

WE'LL TAKE  
THAT UNDER  
ADVISEMENT,  
COLONEL.  
DISMISSED.

WELL, GENTLEMEN...

I AGREE  
WITH FURY'S  
ASSESSMENT.

YES.

AGREE.

IF OUR LONG-TERM  
PLANS ALL COME TO  
FRUITION, I SUG-  
GEST WE CONSIDER  
OUR COLLEGE, FURY  
FOR A MORE  
IMPORTANT  
ASSIGNMENT...



NEXT  
**DEATH IN  
THE MIDEAST!**

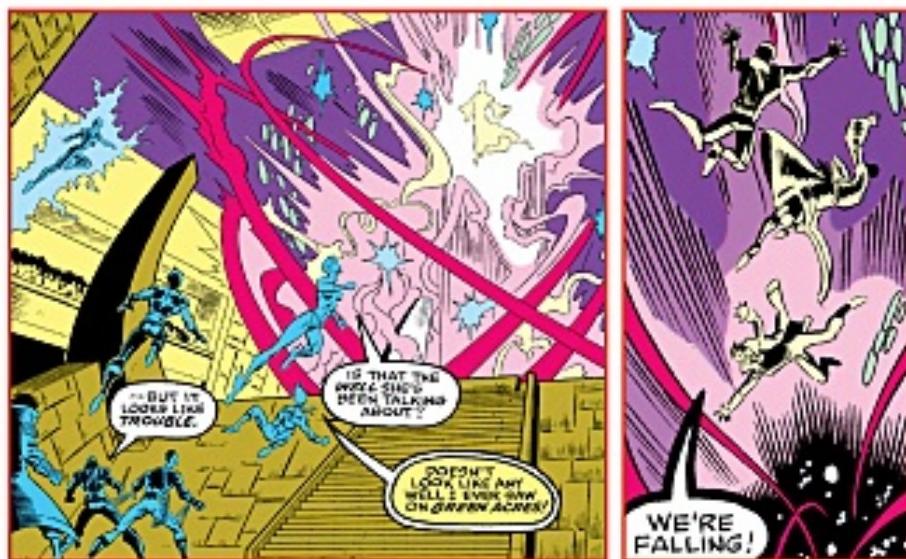
Nick Fury's work as a C.I.A. operative garnered the attention of a group of government officials who were in the process of creating Project: S.H.I.E.L.D. (Supreme Headquarters International Espionage Law-Enforcement Division), the precursor to a top-secret organization they intended to secure Earth from any terroristic, tyrannical or criminal threats. Project: S.H.I.E.L.D., later just S.H.I.E.L.D., was supported by countless businesspeople and politicians around the globe, quickly becoming a vast international intelligence agency employing exotic and cutting edge technology largely supplied by industrialist and weapons manufacturer Howard Stark. Fury was offered—and accepted—the directorial position within the new organization, answering only to its executive council. It is unclear if the council was aware of his concurrent position as Man on the Wall. Fury's consideration for Project: S.H.I.E.L.D. is depicted in *Marvel: The Lost Generation #10* (2000). S.H.I.E.L.D.'s first appearance (and Fury's first depiction with the organization) is in *Strange Tales #135* (1965).



Wishing to return Earth to the state it was when they ruled it, the ancient beings called the Gibborim gathered a cabal of six criminal couples together and offered them a chance to rule Los Angeles in exchange for serving them. The Gibborim also offered to let six of them survive into the new paradise. This group, called the Pride, came to rule nearly the entire west coast of America through alliances with criminals and law enforcement and would sacrifice a young girl to the Gibborim annually. When one couple became pregnant, the other five couples agreed that the six survivors in the coming paradise should be one child from each couple. The Pride's origin is presented in *Runaways #13* (2004).



Sin-Cong is a small Southeast Asian country that borders Vietnam. A French protectorate in the 1800s, independence was eventually won through a revolution spearheaded by future warlord Wong-Chu. Helping him was Jacques Duquesne, who would later become the Avenger called Swordsman. Sin-Cong became communist ruled following their independence, and since then, it has been an unstable country in the region; the decades-long Sin-Cong Conflict ultimately drew the involvement of nations and superhumans from around the world. Sin-Cong first appeared in *Avengers #18* (1965), and the revolution against France is shown in the second story in *Avengers Spotlight #22* (1989). NOTE: To accommodate for the passage of time, some Marvel Universe references of character involvement in the Vietnam War have been retroactively retitled to be the Sin-Cong Conflict; the Vietnam War remains a world event that took place from 1955-1977 in the Marvel Universe as well as it did in reality. Therefore, due to the retroactive continuity, some in-story presentations of Marvel characters in the Vietnam War should be considered a depiction of the Sin-Cong Conflict.



**The Well of All Things** was a portal that intersected multiple dimensions, subsequently releasing vast interdimensional energies; the well was housed in Cambodia's centuries-old hidden Temple of the Dragon's Breath, built by a tribe that practiced selective breeding to someday harness the power of the well. While in the geographical area for the Sin-Cong Conflict, a unit of American soldiers stumbled upon the temple and became involved in a plot created by tribal leader Tai, a plot that involved breeding between the soldiers and tribal women. Tai's plan would span decades and eventually result in children of power but was ultimately undone by Night Thrasher (Dwayne Taylor) and the New Warriors. The story of the Well of All Things can be found in *New Warriors #18-25* (1991-1992).



as the Mandarin—was to control China and the world in order to bring wisdom and harmony to all. Among his endeavors was the patronage of Wong-Chu and the Sin-Cong revolutionary war. His eventual crime lord ways would bring him into conflict with American superhumans, specifically Iron Man. Mandarin's origin is told in *Tales of Suspense #62* (1964), with more details added in retellings presented in *Iron Man #267-268* (1991) and *Iron Man #274* (1991).



The Japanese Lady Lotus used her psionic powers and martial arts skills in service to the Axis powers during World War II, using exposure to lotus flowers to heighten her powers. Angered at the treatment of the Japanese in the United States during the war, Lotus vowed to destroy America; during the war, she came into conflict with the Invaders as a member of the Super-Axis superhuman group. Her criminal activities continued into modern times as Lotus Newmark in and around Los Angeles, California, her age and beauty somehow preserved. *Invaders #39* (1979) revealed her origin and details of her life up to World War II; *Captain America: Forever Allies #1-4* (2010-2011) confirmed she and Lotus Newmark were one and the same; her involvement in the Sin-Cong Conflict is new information revealed in this issue.



Wong-Chu was a revolutionary in the Southeastern Asian country of Sin-Cong and was instrumental in the country winning independence from France. However, after the war, he turned to communism and crime, eventually helping to bring his country into decades of bloody conflict with other countries and superhumans from around the globe. Wong-Chu's capture of American industrialist Tony Stark resulted in Stark's creation of the first Iron Man armor. The second story in *Avengers Spotlight* #22 (1989) tells of Wong-Chu's revolutionary days in Sin-Cong; *Iron Man* #267-268 (1991) and *Tales of Suspense* #39 (1963) detail his involvement in the origin of Iron Man.



from the terrorist Wong-Chu and his guerrilla forces by creating the first version of his advanced super-armor; together, the two men relied on each other to get to safety. To repay the help Rhodes gave his "friend," Stark offered Rhodes a job as a pilot. The wartime meeting of the two men who would become great friends is in the second story of *Iron Man* #144 (1981), while further exploits in the conflict can be found in *Daredevil* #258 (1988).

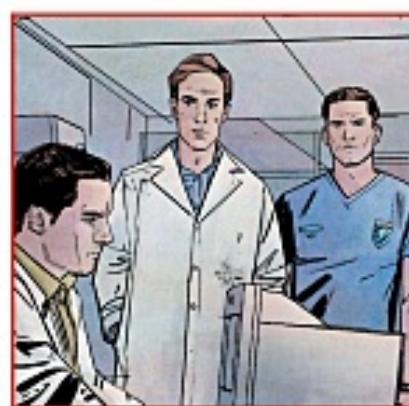
Failed seminary student Frank Castiglione (later Frank Castle) joined the Marines, hoping to make a difference in the world by punishing evil. After basic training, he went on tours of duty for four years and was decorated with the Bronze Star, the Silver Star and four Purple Hearts. During the war, Castle received Special Forces training and became an anti-authority loner who eventually gave in to violence and brutal tactics. Early in his service, Castle murdered his first criminal, leading him down a dark and terrible path. In-depth accounts of Castle's activities in the Southeast Asian conflict can be found in *The 'Nam* #52-53 (1991) and *The 'Nam* #67-69 (1992).



*Fantastic Four* #11 (1963) was the first mention of the wartime activities of Americans Ben Grimm and Reed Richards. Grimm served as a pilot of remarkable skill, while Richards served with the Office of Strategic Services, a wartime intelligence agency. While this account originally placed their service during World War II, the necessary adjustment to account for the passage of time has retroactively adjusted their service to be during the Sin-Cong Conflict instead. While the OSS no longer existed by the time of the Sin-Cong Conflict, we can assume Richards served in a comparable agency.



Angered that his son Thor, now the Asgardian god of thunder, provoked a pointless battle with some of Asgard's enemies, Odin exiled him to Earth (Midgard) to live in the human form of Donald Blake to learn humility. As Blake, Thor had no memory of who he truly was and lived out a life as a mortal doctor. *Thor* #159 (1968).



When child prodigy and genius Reed Richards started attending university, he met football player Ben Grimm, who would become his roommate and best friend, and Victor Von Doom, a fellow genius from the European country Latveria, whose potential was partially crippled by an unstable ego. Doom proceeded to initiate a rivalry with Richards to prove himself the greater intellect, while Grimm promised Richards he would fly the spaceship Richards dreamed of building, should it ever be made. The college connection between the future archenemies is first mentioned in *Fantastic Four* #5 (1962) and further detailed in *The Thing* #1 (1983).



*Fantastic Four* #1 (1961) reveals that Reed Richards did build his spaceship years later. But when government backing was withdrawn, Richards convinced Grimm to take it for a test flight before the project was shut down. Richards' girlfriend Susan Storm and her younger brother, Johnny Storm, insisted on accompanying them. The foursome would sneak past security and take a flight that would change the course of their lives forever.



**STAN'S SOAPBOX**

Okay, students! The subject of today's swingin' seminar will be "Where Do You Nuts Get Your Ideas?" That question is asked of Yours Truly at lectures, interviews, and bull sessions more often than any other. So, let's kick it around for Marveldom Assembled. The point is, ideas are no problem. Here in the Bullpen, we can't talk to each other for five minutes without coming up with a zillion new thoughts and angles. The big hangup is getting the time to develop the ideas . . . to polish them, and refine them until we feel they'll have maximum impact — until we know they'll be an integral part of the ubiquitous Marvel universe! Everyone has ideas — you, I, the gang in the mailroom — even our competitors, bless 'em. What really counts is what you DO with them. We believe that almost any idea can be worthwhile, if it's presented with integrity, taste, and imagination. For, an idea is like a guitar — it doesn't mean a thing unless you know how to use it! Excelsior.

Smiley

STAN LEE  
FOREVER

artwork of Happy HOWARD PURCELL can be? Since he's taken over the Watcher yarn which rounds out our spellbinding SILVER SURFER mag, we wonder how we ever got along without him! Howie still teaches art in his spare time, so poor Smiley has to think twice before trying to make like an editor! And, by the way, no matter how you slice it, THE SILVER SURFER is probably the biggest smash hit in comic mag publishing since the still-be!

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... a new, even  
and the outer  
Prepare to be star

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mas — and Nick  
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mystic master  
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gleaming  
dynamite!

**NOT BORN YESTERDAY**  
— with  
and m  
of our

**COLLECTOR'S F.F.**  
twee  
**RAW**